

Message Text

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44

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NAIROBI FOR REDSO

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP (DAVIS, NATHANIEL), PFOR XA ET

SUBJECT: TRAVEL OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY DAVIS: MEETING WITH
PLANNING COMMISSIONER PAULO ABRAHAM

1. ATO PAULO OPENED THE DISCUSSION WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY DAVIS, AMBASSADOR HUMMEL, AID DIRECTOR WITHERS AND ECON/COMM COUNSELOR WILSON BY EXPRESSING IN RATHER STRONG TERMS THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT'S GRATITUDE FOR THE "TREMENDOUS ASSISTANCE" ETHIOPIA HAS RECEIVED OVER THE YEARS FROM THE US BOTH FOR DROUGHT RELIEF AND GENERAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS. HE THEN WENT ON TO EXPLAIN THAT THE CURRENT REGIME HAS PLACED HEAVY EMPHASIS ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT THEREBY HOPING TO BRING GREATER BALANCE INTO ITS DEVELOPMENT EFFORT. TURNING NEXT TO THE LAND REFORM PROGRAM, HE CHARACTERIZED IT AS "RADICAL AND REVOLUTIONARY" AND STATED THAT IT WOULD PROBABLY CREATE AT LEAST SOME DISLOCATIONS WHICH COULD RESULT IN PRODUCTION SHORTFALLS. HE HOPED THAT, SHOULD SUCH SHORTFALLS MATERIALIZE, THE US WOULD BE PREPARED TO HELP ETHIOPIA OVERCOME THIS GAP BY PROVIDING FOOD GRAINS. ATO PAULO NEXT MENTIONED THE GOVERNMENT'S INTENTIONS TO UNDERTAKE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMS AND IRRIGATION SCHEMES. AS THESE PROJECTS ARE FAIRLY WELL DEFINED, HE HOPED THAT THEY MIGHT PROVE ESPECIALLY ATTRACTIVE TO DONORS LIKE THE US. FINALLY ATO PAULO INDICATED THAT THE EPMG PLANS AN URBAN DEVELOPMENT EFFORT WHICH WILL

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STRESS LOW COST HOUSING FOR THE URBAN POOR. AS THIS IS GOING

TO BE A VERY AMBITIOUS PROGRAM IN AN AREA GENERALLY NEGLECTED IN THE PAST, HE HOPED THE US WOULD BE ABLE TO ASSIST IN THIS EFFORT.

2. DAVIS RESPONDED BY EXPRESSING HIS PLEASURE THAT THE USG HAS BEEN ABLE TO HELP THE ETHIOPIAN PEOPLE DURING THE PAST YEARS AND HOPED THAT CLOSE RELATIONS IN THIS AREA WILL CONTINUE INTO THE FUTURE. HE NOTED HIS AWARENESS OF PRELIMINARY DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN AID AND EPMG OFFICIALS REGARDING THE POSSIBLE PROVISION OF FOOD GRAINS UNDER PL-480, TITLE I. HE STATED THAT HE IS FOLLOWING ETHIOPIA'S LAND REFORM PROGRAM WITH INTEREST AND HOPES THAT A CLEAR DISTINCTION WILL BE MAINTAINED BETWEEN PRODUCTION SHORTFALLS RESULTING FROM DROUGHT AND THOSE RESULTING FROM LAND REFORM; THIS DISTINCTION MAY BECOME ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT IN DEALING WITH FUTURE INTERNATIONAL PRESS INTEREST IN LAND REFORM AND DROUGHT. DAVIS CONCLUDED WITH THE OBSERVATION THAT THE GENERAL ATTITUDE OF THE US TOWARD ETHIOPIA IS "ENTIRELY CONSTRUCTIVE" AND THAT THE USG WOULD "CONSIDER SYMPATHETICALLY" PROPOSALS PUT FORWARD BY THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT.

3. ATO PAULOS REITERATED ONCE AGAIN THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT'S GREAT APPRECIATION FOR US AID AND STRESSED THAT US ASSISTANCE LEVELS WERE NOT "MODEST" BUT VERY SUBSTANTIAL. HE ALSO STATED HIS APPRECIATION FOR DAVIS' EXPLANATION OF THE GENERAL US ATTITUDE AND POSTURE TOWARD ETHIOPIA AND ITS DEVELOPMENT ASPIRATIONS. HE ASKED AGAIN ABOUT URBAN DEVELOPMENT AS A POSSIBLE AREA FOR US ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. DR. WITHERS STATED HE THOUGHT SUCH SUPPORT MIGHT BE PERMISSIBLE UNDER US LAW AS THE CONGRESS JUST LAST YEAR HAD MODIFIED THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT TO INCLUDE URBAN AS WELL AS RURAL DEVELOPMENT AS APPROPRIATE AREAS FOR US ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE.

4. DAVIS CLOSED THE MEETING BY REITERATING HIS PLEASURE AT THE "HAPPY COINCIDENCE" OF EPMG DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES AND THE GUIDELINES THE US CONGRESS HAD LAID DOWN FOR THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH TO FOLLOW IN SUPPORTING THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF LESS DEVELOPED NATIONS.
HUMMEL

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